

THE
MIRROR OF THE STAGE

New Dramatic Censor;

CONSISTING OF

ORIGINAL MEMOIRS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTORS,

CRITICISMS

OF THE

NEW PIECES AND PERFORMERS;

ANECDOTES, ORIGINAL ESSAYS,

&c. &c. &c.

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Embellished with a striking Portrait by I. R. Cruikshank, Esq. of

Mr. KEAN, as LEONATUS POSTHUMOUS,
IN "CYMBELINE."

LONDON:

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"LYNX" may be very sharp sighted, but we charitably hope, that he "not only sees what is, but what is not."

The communication from "CORDELIA" is of a most heart-rendering character, and, we think, too touching for the sensibilities of our readers.

The complaint of an "AUTHOR" is of an every-day description. The only comfort we can bestow on the gentleman is, that his case is by no means particular, he has "fellowship in sorrow."

We think "AN ENQUIRER" is mistaken; we have not as yet heard whether Mr. Hector Simpson is training a bear for *Perouse*, or Mr. Bengough for *Richard*—certainly not a kangaroo.

X. Y. Z. shall be attended to.

"MARIA" is very pretty, but she wants maturity before we can give her a place in our sheets.

We have received the communication of "FLICKBERTIGIBBET,"—he is, indeed, "a foul fiend."

"PISTOL'S" name "becomes him well," and we know not whether we can better answer him, than by quoting the awful yet plithy avowal of a late walking monarch—"a puddle in a storm," &c.

LIST OF SUBSCRIPTIONS AT THE DRURY LANE FUND DINNER.

	£	s.		£	s.
HIS MAJESTY	105	0	— Carter, Esq.	5	5
Duke of York	52	10	— Secker, Esq.	5	5
Duke of Bedford	52	10	Chancellor of the Exchequer ..	10	0
Marquis of Hertford	50	0	Colonel Berkeley	10	0
Marquis of Anglesey	25	0	H. Fauntleroy, Esq.	10	10
Marquis of Stafford	10	0	W. Collins, Esq.	5	0
Earl of Fife	30	0	Grenville Berkeley, Esq.	6	0
Earl of Essex	10	0	J. H. M. Dawson, Esq.	5	0
Lord Henniker	10	10	E. Maclean, Esq.	5	0
Earl of Mulgrave	5	0	A. Macklen, Esq.	5	0
Earl of Coventry	5	0	C. Calvert, Esq.	10	10
Lord W. Gordon	5	0	J. Calcraft, Esq.	10	0
Earl of Clanricard	10	0	P. Grenfell, Esq.	10	0
Lord G. Lenox	10	0	W. Curtis, Esq.	5	5
Lord W. Lenox	10	0	W. Linley, Esq.	5	5
Hon. G. A. Ellis	5	0	Rowland Stephenson, Esq. ..	10	10
Sir T. Farquhar	10	10	Sir J. Doyle	5	0
W. J. Denison, Esq.	10	10	Sir T. Lethbridge	5	0
Colonel Hughes	10	10	Sir S. B. Morland	5	5
C. Greenwood, Esq.	10	0	F. B. Morland, Esq.	5	5
Serjeant Lens	21	0	H. Hammersley, Esq.	10	10
J. G. Lambton, Esq.	10	0	J. A. Powell, Esq.	5	0
R. Wilson, Esq.	10	0	J. Gowing, Esq.	5	0
T. Griffith, Esq.	21	0	J. Soane, Esq.	52	10
J. Hayne, Esq.	21	0	T. Welsh, Esq.	10	0
A. Copland, Esq.	5	0	T. Metcalfe, Esq.	5	5
T. F. Savory, Esq.	5	0	Sir W. Rawlins	10	10
Colonel Roper	5	0	— Wamble, Esq.	5	0
R. W. Devey, Esq.	5	0	B. Onkley, Esq.	5	0
Messrs. Johnson, Hector, and Davidson	10	10	J. Fullarton, Esq.	5	5

THE

Mirror of the Stage;

OR,

NEW DRAMATIC CENSOR.

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"To hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature;
To show virtue her own feature; scorn her own image;
And the very age and body o' th' times its form and pressure."

No. 22.] MONDAY, JUNE 2d, 1823. [Vol. II.

MR. KEAN.

HAVING in No. 18 of our work giving a slight Biographical Sketch of this highly distinguished actor, we are induced to give a second portrait of him, for the purpose of putting our readers in possession of the following facts connected with his successful career.

Mr. Kean made his first appearance at Drury Lane, in the character of *Shylock*, on the 26th of January, 1814, being the 110th night of the season. On the first night, the receipts were only £164. 11s. 6d., on the ninth night, £531. 2s. He performed it fourteen nights, and this character netted to the treasury £4921. 3s. averaging for the receipts of each night £351. 10s.

Richard III. was performed twenty-five nights this season. His first appearance in *Gloster* took place Feb. 12th, 1814. The receipts the first night, were £353. 7s.; on the sixth night, £655. 13s. 6d. It netted to the treasury £14,063. 9s., averaging for each night £562. 10s. 8d.

Hamlet was performed March 12th, 1814. He played it eight nights; the receipts the first night were £660. 2s. It netted to the treasury £4099. 18s. 6d.; average £512. 9s. 9d. each night.

Othello and Iago were played alternate nights. The first night of the former was the 5th; of the latter, the 7th of May, 1814. The receipts on the first night of *Othello* were £501. 0s. 6d. On the first night of *Iago* £570. 2s.; on the second night £573. 6s. 6d.; on the sixth night of *Othello* 673. 18s. 6d. *Othello* was played ten nights, *Iago* eight nights, the eighteen nights netted to the treasury £8485. 14s. 6d.; averaging for each night £471. 8s. 7d. The average taking each character separately, is for *Othello* £476. 4s. 6d., for *Iago* £465. 8s. 6d.

Riches.—Mr. Kean performed *Luke* in this play, for his own benefit, on the 25th of May, 1814, when the receipts were £636. 15s. 6d. He afterwards played it as a stock-piece three nights, and the net receipts were £1372. 7s. 6d., averaging for these three £457. 9s. 2d. each night. His own night is of course omitted in this average.

All these averages were taken independent of the receipts from the private boxes, which amounted to £1700. for sixty-eight nights, the total number of Mr. Kean's nights the first season. The treasury netted, therefore, from Mr. Kean's performances, the enormous sum of £34,642. 12s. 6d. giving for sixty-eight nights an average of 509. 9s. per night.

It appears from the treasury books, that no less than 166,742 persons paid during this season to see Mr. Kean.

When Mr. Kean came to the theatre, the receipts averaged for the preceding 110 nights at £212. per night, which would give for the whole season £49,820.; but the receipts were actually £68,329., so that Mr. Kean must have brought into the treasury £18,509. Now Mr. Kean's engagement for five years, at £20. per week, only amounts to £3900., which leaves to the management £14,609. gained by his engagement, if he had not played after the first season.

DRURY-LANE THEATRICAL FUND DINNER.

The Anniversary Dinner of this Institution has been celebrated at the Freemasons' Tavern. About 350 persons of the first distinction assembled at six o'clock, when the MARQUIS OF HERTFORD, in the absence of the DUKE OF YORK, took the Chair.

The dinner and arrangements were of the most sumptuous and splendid description. After the cloth was removed, the usual loyal toasts were given, and several glees executed with great taste and effect.—The noble Chairman apologized for the absence of the DUKE OF YORK, whose illness had deprived him of the pleasure of meeting the Company.

Upon the toast of "the Drury Lane Theatrical Fund and its master MR. KEAN" being given, MR. KEAN then rose, and addressed the Meeting in nearly the following words:—

"For the sixth time I have fully to offer the thanks of this Institution, and the heart-felt gratitude of our claimants, to that generous public, which with unwearied liberality, are ever ready to afford to 'houseless heads and unfed sides' such noble shelter and protection. It is my grateful duty to declare to this assembly, that this fund, from a state of the lowest indigence, which made it almost a necessity to reduce the small pittance of our annuitants: we, under the protection of that exalted personage, whose absence this day has excited such general regret, have amassed a capital of £16,136. This not only enables us to secure the necessities of life for ten otherwise helpless brethren, but leaves a surplus of two hundred pounds a year. This surplus it is our intention, under the sanction of our benefactors, to apply to their comforts, as well as their bare existence,

"In doing this, we are sure we are acting up to the wishes of our immortal founder, MR. GARRICK—a name, which cannot be uttered without veneration—a name, which concentrated in its character every perfection of the actor and the man—

'That to speak the least part to the height,
Would ask an angel's tongue, and yet then end
In silent admiration.'

To speak in the language of contemporaries, his loss upon the Stage left a vacuum that never has been, that never can be, supplied. His liberal education and gentlemanly acquisitions recommended him to the friendship of a Johnson, a Reynolds, a Burke, a Sterne, and a Smollett. With all the stars of the literary hemisphere, in which great circle his name will undetracted be transmitted to posterity, while the foundation of this fund has raised to his benevolence an everlasting monument. He guarded it through his life with parental affection

and the spirit that gave it existence appeared to hover over it after his decease. His last will recorded his posthumous liberality, by placing four thousand pounds for its aid in the hands of his executors.

"The present beneficence of the Public convinces me that his name is still the talisman which binds us together. For though there are rival and numerous institutions of this nature, the splendid assemblage of to-day gives the directors a confidence that 'Garrick's Fund' will never be unsupported.

"It is a matter of surprise, as well as of regret, that our subscriptions from the profession are disproportioned to their numbers. This is much to be lamented; for in the present precarious state of Theatricals, we do not know, who may not, in a few years hence, require assistance. The numerous Theatres—the influx of actors—the love of variety, renders the actor's fame of most uncertain tenure, and the enjoyment of the sunshine to-day, I fear, is but the presage of obscurity to-morrow. If any of our brothers, who do not subscribe are present, without wishing to wound their feelings, I shall only declare, that it was the founder's wish to keep this Fund solely under the protection of the actors; and their dereliction has compelled us to seek from the stranger that relief which should have been ministered by our brethren. That the stranger has bound us in eternal gratitude, the blessings of the aged, the grateful tear of the widow, and the prayers of the orphan, are unequivocal testimonial.

"And here permit me to advert to the hapless case of the relict of Mr. CARR, and her numerous family. For them we felt it our duty to extend the bounds of this charity, and I trust it will meet the approbation of those patrons whose hearts we know are ever open to the calls of distress, and whose hands are ever ready to relieve it.

"A British public, I am convinced, does not require that fulsome adulation generally bestowed at charitable meetings. The pleasure of serving our fellow creatures carries with it its own reward; and I doubt not it will add to the hilarity of this company to learn, that the objects of their bounty are at this moment lifting the grateful cup to the health and happiness of their benefactors.

"Little has occurred since the last Meeting to merit consideration, but it may be necessary to inform our patrons that their liberality at the last dinner netted to the institution the clear sum of six hundred and ninety-six pounds. Since then, though I have to regret the loss of a highly valued friend, yet I feel pleasure in naming her as an additional benefactress to the Fund. One who has ever watched over its interests with the most anxious solicitude, and while preparing to join the kindred spirit that gave it birth, left a memorial of her last wishes for its prosperity. I speak of the late Mrs. GARRICK, who has bequeathed to this Fund the sum of five hundred pounds.

"As it is probably the last time I may have the honor of addressing this brilliant assembly on the same subject, I beg leave to offer you my Lord, in the name of my Colleagues, our heart-felt thanks for your kindly accepting the Chair in this day's emergency.

"My Lord, whatever may be my humble destiny, I shall always have a proud and grateful sense of the condescending attention your Lordship has this day honored me with, and I hope my brethren will believe that whatever changes may take place, whatever waters may divide us—that my good wishes will always accompany their pursuits and the prosperity of this Fund be an object to me of the dearest interest.

This speech was followed by loud cheering.

Mr. BRAHAM then sang *Scot's wha hae wi' Wallace bled*. The amount of Subscriptions was declared to be greater than ever before known. Eleven hundred pounds were announced when we left the room.

MR. MATHEWS.

An American Paper says, "This celebrated hero of the sea, took leave of a numerous and brilliant audience on Saturday evening. He appeared in the farce of *The Review*, *Polly Parker*, and *Monsieur Tonson*. At the conclusion of the farce Mr. Mathews

came forward, and thanked the audience for the very flattering reception he had received since his arrival in this city. He dwelt with peculiar delight on the encouragement experienced in those pieces which he represented by himself, and appeared evidently much embarrassed when about bidding his audience adieu.—He observed that, notwithstanding the Atlantic would very soon divide them, yet he would remember with fond delight the noble hospitality, generosity and kindness so often bestowed upon him—and, above all, the unbounded approbation he so frequently received from the crowded and brilliant audiences which repeatedly graced the theatre, would be cherished with gratitude to the remotest period of his existence. Here his feelings almost overcame him. Mr. Mathews said, “Ladies and Gentlemen, you will no doubt meet with many possessing more abilities than myself, but I do most sincerely assure you, none can feel more gratitude and affection—I am unable to proceed; permit me to bid you all an affectionate farewell.” He retired amidst the acclamations of the audience.

MR. OXBERRY.

We read in the *Arabian Nights* of a man that breaks his leg from the intended kindnesses of an intrusive barber. Enquiring friends might sometimes meet rather discouraging answers to their amiable solicitude. A gentleman thus puts a question

“TO THE EDITOR OF THE EXAMINER.

Sir,—May I beg a small place in the *Examiner* to enquire why, in the present dearth of genuine comic talent at our national theatres, the facetious OXBERRY remains unengaged?—We all recollect the delight afforded us but a few years back by his representation of *Maw-worm*, *Justice Greedy*, and a long line of characters, in many of which he was unrivalled; and yet, in the zenith of his life, we find him laid aside—a mere blank in the theatrical world, and the stage improperly divested of a valuable ally. I sadly fear, Sir, the cause may be traced to a similar spirit of jealousy and envy which suppressed his talents during the last Haymarket season.—Of this we are assured,—most pernicious compacts are entered into between the proprietors of our theatres and certain popular performers, which are equally discouraging to rising talent, and subversive of the best interests of the drama.—Yours, Sir,

May 16th, 1823.

AN OLD PLAY-GOER.”

Theatrical Diary.

DRURY LANE.

May 17th, *Whitsun Eve*, *Oratorio*—19th, *Hamlet*, *Halt of the Caravan*, *Love, Law, and Physic*—20th, *Travellers*, *Killing no Murder*—21st, *Hypocrite*, *Swiss Villagers*, *Simpson and Co*—22nd, *Travellers*, *All the World's a Stage*—23rd, *Pizarro*, *Swiss Villagers*, *All the World's a Stage*—24th, *Travellers*, *Simpson and Co*. *All the World's a Stage*—26th, *Othello*, *Deaf as a Post*, *Love, Law, and Physic*—27th, *Miss Stephens's Night*, *Lord of*

the Manor, Concert, Monsieur Tonson—28th, Cymbeline, Swiss Villagers, All the World's a Stage—29th, Hypocrite, Swiss Villagers, Simpson & Co.

"*The Travellers*" has been played two or three times at farthest; and, as we predicted, makes but slow progress in the opinion of the public. The time is long since past for the success of an opera where the music is its only title to favor: the audiences of a theatre are now too wise to be contented with melody, however harmonious, without the necessary accompaniment of sense.

While we with pleasure refer again to the performance of the comedy of the "*Hypocrite*," which has been twice acted here, in a manner impossible to be excelled, we owe it to our own feelings, and a desire to uphold the moral character of the British Drama, to protest against the too frequent custom of actors deviating from the text of their authors. We know that many modern pieces benefit much from the alterations made in the dialogue by a judicious and sensible actor; but we consider that the fame of a Dramatist who has left "this troubled scene" ought to be held as sacred and inviolable. We are induced to make these observations in consequence of Liston's overstepping the modesty of nature in *Maw-worm*, on Wednesday week. The language of this comedy is loose enough already, without an actor taking on himself the task to encrease it; but Liston, by the adoption of a false emphasis, made it appear gross indeed: we allude to the first scene of the second act; and we ask him, as a father, would he read it to his children in the manner he did on this evening? We are convinced he would not so commit himself as a parent; then, we rejoin, why utter that in a public theatre which is unfit to be heard by a private circle? We regret the occasion which compels us to offer a word of censure on so amusing an actor as Mr. Liston.

On the following evening the laughable farce of "*All the World's a Stage*" was revived and performed throughout with great spirit. Of Liston's *Diggory* we cannot speak too highly, it was the most humorous and laughter-creating piece of acting we ever witnessed; it would be an arduous duty to point out any particular scene as entitled to more praise than another, for the whole performance was faultless. Mrs. Davison, as *Miss Kitty Sprightly*, was as animated and as agreeable as ever, and sung the scraps of the songs mixed up with the part very sweetly. Gattie, Penley, Mercer, W. H. Williams, Mrs. Harlow, and Mrs. Orger, exerted themselves zealously, and were loudly applauded.

Young played *Rolla* very finely, and was ably backed by Cooper, in *Alonzo*, and Mrs. W. West, in *Cora*. We do not approve of Mrs. Glover's efforts in tragedy; she very frequently "out-herod's Herod"—this was the case with her *Elvira*.

Miss Stephens had a bumper on Tuesday, when the "*Lord of the Manor*" was revived. Being, from the fullness of the house, very uncomfortably situated, we must postpone any remarks on this opera until its next performance.

Shakspeare's tragedy of "*Cymbeline*" afforded another opportunity for a display of the talents of Kean and Young, in *Posthumous* and *Iachimo*, who both played in a masterly style of excellence. There is a charm about the acting of Mrs. W. West, in *Imogen*, that leaves

the imagination nothing to wish for: its impression dwells upon the mind with an imperishable feeling of unalloyed pleasure.

Our notice of this theatre is necessarily brief in consequence of the repetition of pieces we before remarked on.

COVENT GARDEN.

May 19th, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Vision of the Sun*—20th, *Clari*, *Vision of the Sun*—21st, *Miss M. Tree's Benefit*, *Twelfth Night*, *Marriage of Figaro*—22nd, *Much ado about Nothing*, *Vision of the Sun*—23rd, *Mr. Farren's Night*, *Antiquary*, *Paul and Virginia*—24th, *Clari*, *Sleep Walker*, *The Duel*—25th, *As You Like It*, *Vision of the Sun*—27th, *Blanchard and Condon's Benefit*, *Provoked Husband*, *Irish Tutor*, *Libertine*—28th, *Yates and Mrs. Gibbs' Benefit*, *School for Scandal*, *Tea and Turn Out*, *Gloances in London*—29th, *Comedy of Errors*, *Cent. per Cent.*

"*Twelfth Night*" was played for Miss A. M. Tree's benefit, and was attended by an audience which fully demonstrated the public valuation of this charming vocalist and, no less delightful actress, who again moved as the fascinating *Viola*. We have, in a former number, spoken of the younger sisters of this lady; and their efforts on this evening fully repaid our expectations. Miss E. Tree, as *Olivia*, made us regret that the powers of an apparently well cultivated mind were circumscribed by so unworthy a character; yet, where it could develop itself, we witnessed the dawning of a refined judgment, and great future capability. Her younger sister played *Cherubino*, and, though evidently embarrassed, executed its music with much taste; her voice however is not yet of sufficient power, and must await the care of nature and science.

"*As You Like It*." After an unaccountable delay, Miss Jones again repeated *Rosalind*, on Monday last. This is, perhaps, one of Shakspeare's most difficult characters; one in which are blended the excellencies and affections of woman with such harmonizing beauty, that to their just development superior capacity is indispensable. We frequently witness *debutants*, who, possessing no assured impediment to after fame, have still a prevailing want of judgment, a tone, a manner, only the emanation of exalted minds. The stage is full of what may be termed *propriety* of acting; mediocrity is the fortune of almost every aspirant, whilst true talent, that commanding sway of genius, at whose potent call the faculties are startled, wrapt, charmed, but scarcely breaks its silence; and the mind becomes more inaccessible to the every-day applicants in proportion as they would throng upon it. We would not have it supposed, that we thus preface the pretensions of Miss Jones: she possesses many requisites for that line of characters she has commenced, among which may be enumerated a most harmonious voice, a discriminating and fanciful taste, with an animated and expressive countenance. Her first scene with *Orlando* was in every respect, perfect; and she portrayed the possession of a new impulse, which o'erstepping form, yet trembling at the venture with much maiden gentleness. In her appeal to the *Duke*, likewise, the transition to imploring helplessness was equally correct, and highly gifted; we also admired her method of delivering her resolution for departure from the *Court*. We cannot exactly follow her through every scene, and must at present

speak but generally. Miss Jones, in many instances, met our imagination of *Rosalind*; but practice, and a further discernment are necessary to present a finished portrait. Mrs. Gibbs's *Audrey* was, perhaps, one of the best played characters in the piece. *Orlando*, by Mr. C. Kenible, is a performance replete with gentleman-like bearing, a thorough acquaintance with the most remote and inconsiderable minutæ of his author; with a taste classic and refined to embody and beautify them: Macready's *Jaques* is one of his happiest efforts: it is noble and elevated, and his genius, disdaining the vain flourishings of lesser powers, is as an old substantial gothic monument of ancient days opposed to the frivolous cottage orné of modern building. We do not, however, admire his personifying "The Justice" in the "Seven Ages." *Jaques* should merely describe, not descend to caricature, whereas Mr. Macready appeared most anxious, by sound and gesture, to give a comic description of the "capon-lined" magistrate: in every other respect he was the *Jaques* of Shakspeare. *Touchstone* so differs from the usual race of valets and impudent footmen, that he can but rarely find a true representative; perhaps Fawcett is the best there is, and "when we haven't what we admire, we must admire what we have." Really, royalty is treated in rather a scurvy style on the stage.—*Duke Frederick* was given to Mr. Evans, a gentleman engaged to play *low comedy*; and we must in justice to Mr. E. allow, that in personating the *Duke*, he in no way violated such engagement.

After the "*Comedy of Errors*," on Thursday evening, in which Mesdames Paton and Tree delighted us as much as ever by their sweet and scientific warblings, a new farce, called "*Cent per Cent, or the Masquerade*," was produced: it is said to be the production of the noble author of the "*Irish Tutor*," its plot is as follows:

Mr. Pennyfarthing (Farren) an usurious old money-lender, has, among his other ills, a fashionable and extravagant wife, (Miss Green) who is desirous of giving a masquerade, without the knowledge of her husband; this she hopes to accomplish through the medium of *Dr. O'Rafferty*, (Connor) an impudent Irish quack, who visits the family as a medical friend. *Old Pennyfarthing* having lent *Captain Dashmore* (Abbott) six hundred pounds, and thirty pounds to *Starch*, (Jones) the captain's servant, determines to arrest both; but his object is defeated by each assuming the dress and character of the other. Irritated at the mistake, and dreading the consequences of actions against him by both master and servant, the old usurer is taken ill, and *O'Rafferty* prepares a sleeping draught for him, in order to keep him in ignorance of the masquerade. *Pennyfarthing*, not taking the nostrum, and being disturbed in the night by the music, (which he fancies proceeds from the house of his neighbour, a gay widow) leaves his room, and a laughable scene ensues, by the masquers mistaking him for one of the company, and he, them for robbers? he, however, discovers the state of the case by the confession of *Dibbs*, his clerk, (Meadows) and turns the tables upon his wife and the quack, by disguising himself, and locking up the supper rooms. This brings about the denouement. The money-lender pardons his wife, gives his daughter *Charlotte*, (Miss Beaumont) to *Captain Dashmore*, because he had shewn a little humanity, and the quack is discarded. There is a sort of underplot between *Charles Hopeful* (Baker) and *Emily Tumbrel*, (Miss Henry) a pair of insipid lovers, who purpose eloping from the masquerade. *Colonel Tumbrel* (Blanchard) and his sister *Deborah* are also introduced; the former for no reason that we could discover, and the latter for the ridiculous display of a love scene between her and *O'Rafferty*.

Such is the plot, which certainly evinces some little ingenuity in the arrangement; the dialogue is not very remarkable for brilliancy.

or wit, and where the latter is attempted, it frequently approaches to indelicacy: the acting was most admirable, particularly Jones, as the foppish *Servant*, Farren, in the *Usurer*, and Conner's *Irishman*, was very rich, and Mrs. Davenport was what she always is in such characters, the very life of the piece. The farce met with considerable opposition, and on its announcement for Friday, the disapprobation was very loud: with alteration it may be made amusing; but it will never have a long run, or become a lasting favorite.

ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE.

"*Hamlet*," "*All at Coventry*." The performance of these pieces was on the whole such as to leave little impression on the mind either of excellence or folly. The Gentleman who appeared as the *Prince* seemed to have a tolerable knowledge of his author, a good deal of self possession, and some experience of the stage; these, together with a slim figure, and a clear though weak voice, enabled him to play the character if not well, at least in such a manner as to induce us to regret the absence of those physical powers without which it is impossible to give a finished picture of *Hamlet*. *Laertes*, by Mr. R. Young, would have been good had he been more perfect: if we mistake not, this gentleman has been sometime on the provincial boards, and he *should* know that *Laertes* is, after the death of his father, usually dressed in black, why, therefore, was it necessary to alter it? could not the house afford Mr. Y. a pair of black silk stockings, or did it arise from vanity on his part? *Polonius*, and the *First Grave-digger*, were played admirably: both exhibited rich comic humour chastened with judgment, and unalloyed with buffoonery or grimace. *Ophelia*, by Miss M. Cooke, was prettily performed; her conception of the character was very good, and her execution of the little plaintive airs gave us a tolerable idea of some taste in singing, but "here we break off" our praise as far as regards the tragedy. The *King*, by a Mr. Rutherford (or rather as he was called in the bills, Gibson) was the most *unkingly* piece of earth we ever saw. *Rosencrantz* and *Guildestern* awkward and unseemly in the extreme. *Osrick*, "a water fly" indeed; and the *Queen*, by Mrs. Tayler from Drury Lane, (one of the *courts* we presume) was as vulgar a piece of kitchen stuff as ever figured away at a country ball.

After the play, *Imitations* were attempted; but with exception of Harley and M. Alexandre, were not worthy of notice. The song of *Prime*, *Bang Up*, by Mr. Andrews, was ill chosen—it was too arduous for his voice.

"*All at Coventry*," in the Gentleman who appeared as *Hamlet* played *Timothy* with some spirit. Andrews, as *Tommy*, dressed and acted the book worm very humourously. The scraps of Latin mixed up with the part we could have wished he had given with more emphasis. *Lively*, in imitation of Harley, we cannot praise, had the youth who played it trusted to his own powers, instead of mimicing another, he would have done much better—The *Old Men* were wretched. Of the Ladies one was lively but a little vulgar, and the other inanimate though somewhat genteel.

SURREY THEATRE.

The list of benefits announced since our last, seem to usher in the close of another season; and which, by the way, are so numerous on the Surrey side of the water, that we seldom calculate with accuracy upon their commencement or duration. The present season we believe is called the Easter season; what the next will be we know not; it has been so unpropitious, that we doubt much the renewal. Mr. H. Kemble is added to the company within the last fortnight, and we have been introduced to the "three northern wonders," Mademoiselle Nerina Ferzi, Monsieur *Somebody*, and Monsieur St. Jean Parsloe;—the feats of the two women on the double rope are clever enough; but then we have so many who do the thing likewise, that little novelty is created. The clown, Parsloe, has had some practice seemingly in posture-making, and his abilities that way deserve commendation; his performance in ascending the top-rail of two chairs is good, and met with great applause. Thursday evening collected a tolerable house for the benefit of that "*meritorious actor, Blanchard*," such it was announced,—why not simply the benefit of Mr. Blanchard? what has the word *meritorious* to do with it? The public is aware of his worth, and reward it accordingly. Such petty sounding of praise is not wanted, it carries with it a littleness of mind, and a vanity which a man of real talent should avoid. Mr. Blanchard is a good minor theatre actor truly, and when he shakes his sword in defiance to Messrs. Auld and Kemble, or some other combatants,—turns on his heel, dodges them from O. P. to P. S., then is he the life of the gods, and "bravo Blanchard, bravo Blanchard," echoes in abundance from all parts of the gallery:—this is very well in its way; but we cannot help signifying our dislike at any thing in the shape of puff. There was the week before a lamentable instance of the kind with Mr. Grove, who contrived to puff himself as

"Mr. ——— is certainly a rising actor; with the qualifications he possesses, he ought not to follow a middle course, nor be content to acquire a feeble fame, but should rather dash at the top of his profession;—in this will he succeed, and in that proud and enviable situation will he maintain himself, if he but attend to the counsels of his friends, by studying deep, and learning to discriminate."

We care not who may have penned this essay upon Mr. Grove's talent;—if they did not mean in *joke*, God help their ideas:—and again—

"From the specimen we witnessed last night of his merit in *Hamlet*, we predict that resolute perseverance, and industrious attention, will in a short time entitle him to rank at least with the first tragedian of the present day. His conception of this arduous part throughout was strictly correct, and in the most prominent passages he elicited excellences that deservedly procured him reiterated plaudits."

All this is too extravagant: it should not be encouraged, and to too much of this kind of bombast is owing, we fear, that ill success which will terminate the Easter season.

ROYAL COBURG.

"*King John*" continues to increase in the estimation of the frequenters of this house. Huntley has resumed his character, and plays it with much energy.

On Monday week a new melo-dramatic entertainment was produced, called "*Whittington and his Cat, or London in 1370.*" As every lisping Miss and Master are acquainted with the tale upon which this piece is founded, it would be an act of supererogation to detail it; it will be sufficient to say, that all the incidents concerning the marvellous story of the thrice Lord Mayor of London are embodied. Some expense has been lavished (unnecessarily we think) on the piece, and the acting of Mrs. Pope, Gale, Loveday, &c. is as good as the trifle deserved; but, jesting apart, it is really too absurd to put the mumbling Mr. Hobbs as the representative of the heroic *Harry the Fifth*: it would indeed be a *sketch of the imagination* to associate him "in our mind's eye" with the conqueror at Agincourt, or "Sweet Hal," the companion of "poor old Jack Falstaff."

SADLER'S WELLS.

A comic sketch called "*The Tinder Box, or Sparks in the Dark,*" has been produced here, with the water-piece exclusive to this house. As for "*The Tinder Box,*" the ingenuity of *Oedipus* could not divine: it has neither plot nor incident, therefore solely depends upon its *wit*, and we have heard many worse things at more considerable houses, than contained in "*The Tinder Box.*" There is a punning taylor, an Irish blunderer, a cockney sensitive plant, with a female of the same *genus*, a run-down spendthrift, and an old woman, with a Dutch husband, all of whom, come on, talk a little, and walk off again. Mr. Elliott throws his usual degree of consequence into the taylor, which is identified by the same stride, swagger, &c. which may be interpreted as "Here I am, damme!" Vale is amusing, and "never lets a chance go by him" to make the most of a broad joke. Vining is a good German or Dutchman, and that is the only reason we see for putting a Mynheer into this piece: a dog-ribbed Indian would have equally served the *plot*. We feel ourselves indebted to the bills for the information that Lancaster is intended for an Irishman: he certainly afforded us great scope for surmise, whether he was Lancashire, York, or Somerset, at last we came to the same conclusion as the debaters did with the hedgehog, that he was "something or another;" and with this we must have rested, but for the communication of the printer. He sings, as he thinks, a song with an appropriate *twang*, but as we do not exactly understand the Maltese or Malay accent, we cannot speak for a certainty on the purity of enunciation in which his Irishman indulges. We suspect Lewis to be one of those actors which Hamlet avows to be made by nature's journeymen. Be we ever so merry, and Lewis appears, it is the tooth-ache in laughter, the cramp in swimming, an apoplexy to enjoyment, and a sexton to interest. Od's Mr. Lewis, why don't you hear the admonition of the gallery, and "Speak up"—"Speak from thy lungs military." A tolerable leg, and a brutus tortured into loveliness, are not the only requisites for an actor. But Mr. Lewis, as Mrs. Ann Page, "talks small-like woman," and we never hear him in sentiment, but our sensibilities

are excited by the recollection of the moanings of a mutilated terrier pup under the hands of a relentless farrier. We have much praise to accord to Miss Johnson, who with much talent personates the ignorant lady—ever keeping the just line of character. All that we can say of Miss Treby is, that she can never, as is never wished, looked a-miss. The piece is an amusing trifle on the whole, and excite the risibility of good audiences.

The water-piece has been got up with a great degree of splendor, and fully merits patronage. Mrs. Egerton plays a *Prince*, with her usual energetic powers, whose developement calls forth their merited acknowledgment.

The *Esquimaux Indians* are engaged, and practise their aquatic manœuvres with great effect. The amusements of the evening are of a most pleasing kind, and may vie with any minor establishment.

OLYMPIC THEATRE.

Monsieur Alexandre has, since our last, given us a fresh proof of his astonishing imitative talents, and peculiar powers of ventriloquism, in a piece entitled "*Nick and the Devil, or Asmodeus in London.*" We very much regret that the author of this trifle had not borrowed some of the wit as well as the characters of Le Sage; the very name of La Diable Boiteux created a thousand associations of pleasantry, and we must in justice to ourselves confess we were much disappointed at not seeing more of our fiendish friend. The old adage of *Hic et ubique* was never more exemplified than by M. Alexandre, for, while we are laughing at his personation of one character, another presents itself so quickly to our views that it almost appears the effect of something above humanity. As far as the actor is concerned nothing can be finer: the variety of changes, of habit, co-tume, and voice, from the crying of an infant to the hoarse bawling of a watchman, the mewing of cats, growling and barking of dogs, cackling of geese, grunting of pigs, &c. &c. The truth and fidelity with which these are mimicked, and the unassuming manners of the performer, excite the most pleasing feelings of delight and astonishment. As we have before hinted, had the author done as much for M. Alexandre as was accomplished in the former entertainment of the *Rogueries of Nicholas*, which, by the way, was a very well written and witty piece, the success of it would have been triumphant; but when we saw it the first time it appeared rather too long and very heavy, since which, however, it has undergone some judicious curtailment, and is highly applauded by very good houses.

VAUXHALL GARDENS.

This beautiful and fashionable resort was opened on Monday week under the most flattering auspices. The Proprietors are the same spirited gentlemen under whose directions it was so successful last season. The alterations and improvements are of the most expensive and costly description, and exhibit great taste in their arrangement: they are so numerous that we scarcely know where to begin. The most

prominent is a completely formed theatre of large dimensions, with dressing rooms, and other essentials. The stage is about 50 feet in height, and 40 broad; the scenery is well painted; and the drop is a fine representation of Lake Albano in Italy. A complete ballet, founded on the story of "*Cinderella*," is here performed chiefly by female children, who display considerable talent, particularly the young lady who personates *Cinderella*; she dances, very gracefully. The company viewing the ballet are protected from any sudden alteration in the weather by an awning of canvas, which can, in a few minutes, be drawn so as to afford a complete covering: the only thing which detracts from the pleasure of viewing the ballet is, that the stage not being sufficiently raised, precludes our seeing the dancing so well as we could wish. Of a Mr. Brown, who performs several characters in the style of Mathews, and gives Imitations of most of the London actors, we cannot speak in terms of favor; and as we perceive this is the last week of his engagement; we shall not say another sentence about him. The next performance that claims attention is that of the Concert, in which Misses Tanstall, Ward, H. Melville, and Williams, together with Messrs. Goulden, Collier, Clark, and Master Longhurst, sing some very sweet airs in good style, and with much judgment. The place of our old favorites, Dignum and C. Taylor, is supplied by Mallinson, from Bath, who sings the songs allotted to him with considerable humour, particularly one about the *New Marriage Act*, and a duet with Miss Tanstall, called *Pretty Pretty Molly Hopkins*, which is a very laughable composition, and is sung in a manner that invariably produces rapturous encore. A very clever boy, Master Balfe, performs a concerto on the violin with surprising execution and effect. The French Mechanical Theatre has likewise been improved, and now presents a beautiful view of the Bay of Naples by moonlight, and an admirable representation of Mount Vesuvius at the time of a volcanic eruption, shewing a lake of burning lava forcing its way through the adjoining country; this is truly magnificent, and has a very fine effect.

Feeling it impossible to do adequate justice to the numerous improvement in the Gardens, in the limited space which we are able only to devote to them in this number, we shall postpone the conclusion of our remarks till our next.

PROVINCIAL THEATRES.

In the hope of communicating valuable information to those who honor our work by a perusal of its pages, we have, at various periods, given what we thought to be *fair and just* critiques on the merits of those who perform at the Portsmouth and other theatres;—As the nature of our duties compel a constant residence in the metropolis, we have, of course, implicitly relied upon the accounts which we received from a correspondent, dated from Portsmouth.—A communication, bearing on the face of it the stamp of truth and probability, obtained a ready insertion in our columns, because we had a better opinion of human nature than to suppose any being would wantonly and basely pen a deliberate falsehood:—how great, therefore, is our surprise and disgust, to find that, an individual who calls himself an *Officer and a Gentleman*, should be so forgetful of the proverbial gal-

laury of the one and the honorable feeling of the other, as to become, without motive, (except that of the basest and most unmanly kind) the slanderer of an amiable female; the villainous assassin of an actress's reputation, who, until his *viperous attack*, was as far above suspicion and reproach as

"Ossa to a wart."

It is a source of gratification to us to know that in our two last accounts of the Portsmouth Theatre, we omitted not only a great portion of the abuse levelled against Mrs. Davies, but the ridiculous and fulsome praise of Miss Kelly. We make allowance for the warmth of a man's feelings where women are concerned; and we know, by experience, that, as their smiles raise us to the pinnacle of joy, so their frowns sink us to the "lowest Erebus," and when despairing of their good opinion, we are prompted to

"Do such deeds—

"As the very sight would ache to look upon."

With this feeling, we erased the invectives of our correspondent, and attributed them to a defective judgment: we are sorry, therefore, to be compelled to avow, that it proceeded from motives less worthy, and we hasten to correct the error into which we have unfortunately fallen, in the hope of making every reparation in our power. To Mrs. Davies we beg to express our sincere sorrow for being the unintentional cause of exposing her to a moment's uneasiness. Of her as an actress we know nothing; but this we do know, that if she exhibits on the stage *one half* of the mildness and gentility which we have had *ocular* demonstration she possesses in private life, she is the very opposite of what the critique mentions. In confirmation of her excellence as an actress, and the versatility of her talents, we have seen some highly commendatory remarks in a respectable Provincial Paper; and, by the daily bills of the theatre we perceive, it was her and not Miss Kelly who played the characters of *Mrs. Oakley, Annabel, Juliana*, and many others equally eminent:—thus far for the lady; but for the fellow who has been the direct cause of our fault, we caution him to beware of again risking an imposition upon us. We know him and his worthless coadjutors; and we shall assuredly expose them to the world in all their native baseness. Let them pause, or they shall feel the truth of *nemo me impune lacessit*.

Since writing the above, we have received the following, by which it will be seen that a cotemporary has committed the same error as ourselves.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MIRROR OF THE STAGE."

Sir,

When any work becomes the medium of slander or unnecessary criticism, it is the duty of every contemporary publication to exhibit a manly abhorrence of such viperous conduct. I allude to the 'DRAMA,' which work contained a critique on the Portsmouth Theatre, apparently written for the purpose of turning into ridicule an amiable lady and highly respectable actress, Mrs. Davies. I was in the theatre when this lady performed *Countess Almaviva* and *Roxana*, and I can with honest truth say I was never better pleased.

For the sake of justice I beg you will insert this; as the public press becomes a public nuisance when made the instrument of malice or revenge. Probably the writer, whom I understand to be a lady, residing in the town, may not have intended to offend; but, at any rate, her criticism is too severe.

A PORTSMOUTH INHABITANT.

LINES.

*Supposed to be addressed by her Secretary to Mary Queen of Scots.
From the charming Picture by FRADELLE.*

Queen of my heart! deign to accept th' offering
Of more than subject's homage! listen awhile
To my poor minstrelsy: for well I know
Thy polish'd mind, by every art accomplish'd,
Is tender too. Pardon me; doth that look,
That so engrosseth all thy steadfast thoughts,
Discourse of love? If not, thy heavy thoughts,
And lend thy ear to me, while on these strings
I'll strive to tell my changeful hopes and fears.
Kind Queen! I read thy goodness in thy eyes,
And may I then unblam'd presume to praise!
(Ye kindred sounds, my soul's intent accord.)
Thy gentle soul's interpreter, thine eye,
As Phoebe soft, and thy smooth open forehead,
The pleasing archness of thy brow: may I too tell
The wond'rous symmetry of that sweet countenance?—
And could I bribe thy not less beauteous ear
To echo to thy modesty, how exquisite
Thy wit, how meek thy spirit, and thy thousand graces;
How every motion gives new beauties birth.—
But language fails: painting or mimic glass,
Thy self reflecting, can alone describe
Th' unnumber'd airy charms, that float around thee,
And make their ambush in thy tasteful dress
Adorning and adorn'd. Could I but persuade,
How dear I value, and would be thy slave,
Then more supremely happy in thy love,
Than were I monarch of the world's contents.

A—B—

Thespian Oracle.

"*The Death of Tom and Jerry*" we are announced at the Coburg: we think it rather retrograde in having the death of a subject *dramatised* long since; and doubt, that but little fame will attend the resurrection-man like efforts of its disturber.

ACCIDENT AT THE ROYALTY.

As Miss Ainslie, of the Royalty Theatre, was performing the part of *Kate*, the other evening, in the piece called "*Life in London*," she had occasion to advance to the front of the stage, when her muslin dress came in contact with the flame of the gas stage-lights, and instantly she was in a blaze. Her consternation was dreadful, and the audience was panic-struck—but as she was rushing out, Mr. Gallot, who filled the character of *Tom*, ran to her assistance, and courageously seized the flaming dress, and extinguished it, amidst the cheers of the whole house. Miss Ainslie, after retiring for a short period, returned to go on with her part, but evidently not wholly recovered from the effects of the terror she had so recently been in from her perilous situation. The Manager should not neglect to place glasses over the lights.

COVENTRY.—A very good company, under the direction of a Mr. Raymond, are performing here with great success: some of the stock plays have been represented in a style much superior to the generality of Provincial Theatres. Kean has been starring it here, in three of his favourite characters, to houses crowded to excess. During the fair, which began on Friday last, and continues for eight days, the theatre will be open every night. We hope the manager's sojourn here will reward his exertions to merit the favor of the good people of this city.



MRS VINING, AS KORAN,
in the
Vision of the Sun.